

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 ARA-10 EA-10 NEA-10
HA-05 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /119 W
-----026545 170359Z /73

O 160200Z JAN 78

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9088
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USUN 0134

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, SF, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: NEXT STEPS

REF: (A) PRETORIA 0254
(B) PRETORIA 0281

1. IN LIGHT OF RESULTS OF PRETORIA AMBASSADORS MOST RECENT
MEETING WITH SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA (REF A),
CONTACT GROUP MET PM JANUARY 16 TO DISCUSS NEXT STEPS ON
NAMIBIA. MABASSADOR MCHENRY STARTED OFF DISCUSSION BY
SUGGESTING THAT TWO ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS MUST BE ANSWERED:
A) WHAT, IF ANYTHING, CAN WE DO TO HEAD OFF A SOUTH AFRICAN
ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN ELECTION DATE? B) ASSUMING SOUTH AFRICA
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MAKES SUCH AN ANNOUNCEMENT, WHAT, IF ANYTHING, CAN WE DO
TO SALVAGE OUR EFFORTS? IN RESPONSE TO THESE QUESTIONS,
CONTACT GROUP AGREED: FIRST, THAT ANOTHER EFFORT MUST
BE MADE TO HEAD OFF ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN ELECTION DATE;
AND SECOND, THAT, EVEN IF THE ANNOUNCEMENT IS MADE, GROUP
SHOULD CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS TO ARRANGE FOR PROXIMITY TALKS.
WHILE GROUP MEMBERS HELD DIFFERING VIEWS ON HOW ADVERSELY SUCH A

SOUTH AFRICAN ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD AFFECT OUR EFFORTS, ALL GENERALLY AGREED THAT AN ADDITIONAL OBSTACLE WOULD BE ADDED TO AN ALREADY OBSTACLE-STREWN COURSE. THERE WAS AGREEMENT, TOO, THAT, IN RESPONSE TO SUCH AN ANNOUNCEMENT, THE FIVE WOULD WANT TO BE CRITICAL AND TO STATE OUR PRESUMPTION THAT, IF AN INTERNATIONALLY-ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT WERE TO BE ACHIEVED, THE ANNOUNCED ELECTION DATE WOULD HAVE TO BE CHANGED, WHILE WE DID NOT ATTEMPT TO DISCUSS EXACT LANGUAGE OF A POSSIBLE STATEMENT IT WAS CLEAR THAT THERE WOULD BE DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE GROUP ON HOW POINTED SUCH A STATEMENT SHOULD BE.

2. WITH REGARD TO EFFORTS WHICH COULD BE TAKEN TO AVERT A SOUTH AFRICAN ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN ELECTION DATE, WE EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT VORSTER WOULD BE AFFECTED BY ANOTHER APPEAL EVEN IF A THREAT WERE INCLUDED. NEVERTHELESS, THERE WAS DISCUSSION OF AN APPROACH AT THE SECRETARY OR HEAD OF STATE LEVEL. CANADA AND UK EXPRESSED RELUCTANCE TO INVOLVE SUCH RANK IN A DEMARCHE RELATING TO THE POSTPONEMENT OF AN ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENT. WE SUGGESTED THAT THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTIONS WOULD BE ANOTHER STEP ALONG THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT TRACK AND THEREFORE, OF THE UTMOST SERIOUSNESS. AT THE SAME TIME WE ACKNOWLEDGED THE PRACTICAL DIFFICULTY OF OBTAINING CONSENSUS AMONG THE FIVE IN SUPPORT OF HIGH-LEVEL DEMARCHES CONTAINING SUFFICIENTLY STRONG LANGUAGE TO BE EFFECTIVE.
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AMBASSADOR MCHENRY THEN SUGGESTED THAT DISTRIBUTION OF OUR PROPOSALS TO THE VARIOUS PARTIES (SOUTH AFRICA, SWAPO, FRONTLINE, NORDCES, ETC.) AND SUBSEQUENT PUBLICATION, IN ADVANCE OF ANY SOUTH AFRICAN ANNOUNCEMENT, MIGHT EFFECTIVELY INCREASE SOUTH AFRICA'S DIFFICULTY IN MAKING THE ANNOUNCEMENT. BY MAKING OUR PROPOSALS PUBLIC, WE MIGHT CREATE A PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE REASONABLENESS OF OUR EFFORTS AND THUS MAKE SOUTH AFRICA LESS WILLING TO EMBARK IMMEDIATELY ON A SEPARATE COURSE. THIS CONCEPTION RECEIVED UNANIMOUS INTEREST.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USUN 0134

THERE WAS NOTICEABLE HESITATION, ESPECIALLY ON THE PART OF THE BRITISH, TO ADVANCED PUBLICATION (AS OPPOSED TO DISTRIBUTION ONLY TO THE PARTIES), BUT ALL MEMBERS OF THE GROUP WERE MUCH MORE FAVORABLE TO THE OTION OF ADVANCED PUBLICATION IN THIS CONTEXT THEN THEY HAD BEEN IN THE PREVIOUS CONTEXT OF RESTRICTING LEAKS. THE BRITISH, IN MULLING THE IDEA OVER, POINTED OUT THAT WE WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO PUBLISH THE PROPOSALS SOON ANYWAY, AND THAT CANADIANS EXPRESSED THEIR BELIEF THAT, IF PUBLICATION DID NOT FORESTALL ANNOUNCEMENT COMPLETELY, IT MIGHT AT LEAST SOFTEN THE LANGUAGE OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT. FRG SUPPORTED PUBLICATION, AND FRANCE DID NOT EXPRESS OPPOSITION TO IT.

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3. IN EXAMINING THE TIMING OF OUR NEXT STEPS, THE GROUP AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE BEST TO DISTRIBUTE OR PUBLISH THE PROPOSALS AFTER HAVING ALREADY ARRANGED WITH BOTH SOUTH AFRICA AND SWAPO FOR A STARTING DATE FOR PROXIMITY TALKS IN FEBRUARY. GROUP, THEREFORE, FELT THAT DISTRIBUTION OR PUBLICATION SHOULD BE HELD OFF UNTIL A RESPONSE IS RECEIVED FROM SOUTH AFRICA TO OUR REQUEST THAT THEY SUGGEST A FEBRUARY DATE FOR TALKS. IN THIS REGARD, IT WAS NOTED THAT SUCH A RESPONSE IS DUE AROUND THE 23RD OF JANUARY. IF RESPONSE IS FORTHCOMING, THERE WOULD STILL BE TIME, FOLLOWING ITS RECEIPT, TO

OBTAIN SWAPO'S APPROVAL OF EXACT DATE AND TO PUBLISH
(OR DISTRIBUTE) BEFORE THE START OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN
PARLIAMENT.

4. ALL OF THE ABOVE ISSUES AND THOUGHTS WILL BE DIS-
CUSSED IN DEPTH DURING THE CONTACT GROUP MEETING OF
JANUARY 18 AT WHICH FOREIGN OFFICE REPRESENTATIVES
WILL BE PRESENT. IN THE MEANTIME, GROUP HAS DECIDED
THAT UK AMBASSADOR SHOULD APPROACH SOUTH AFRICANS INFOR-
MALLY TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER WE CAN IN FACT EXPECT A
RESPONSE, REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF TALKS IN FEBRUARY,
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE SOUTH AFRICAN CABINET MEETING
OF JANUARY 23. IF SOUTH AFRICANS DO AGREE TO TALKS IN
FEBRUARY, BRITISH SUGGESTED THAT SOUTH AFRICANS THEN BE
ASKED WHETHER ANY ACTION WILL BE TAKEN BEFORE THOSE
TALKS WHICH MIGHT JEOPARDIZE THE TALKS.
BRITISH REASON THAT IF ANSWER IF "YES", WE WILL THEN
KNOW WHERE WE STAND; IF "NO", WE MIGHT WISH TO RECONSIDER
PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OR PUBLICATION. IN THIS REGARD
AGAIN EXPRESSED OUR PREFERENCE FOR PUBLICATION AS SOON
AS PROPOSALS ARE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PARTIES IN ORDER
TO ASSURE AGAINST INEVITABLY DISTORTED LEAKS.
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5. AS A SIDELIGHT, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT UN COMMISSIONER
FOR NAMIBIA AHTISARRI TOLD AMBASSADOR MCHENRY TODAY THAT
THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEALING WITH
NAMIBIA HAS BEEN TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR THE END OF APRIL.

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